

A Visit to French Indo-China

MR. AND MRS. J. D. WILLIAMS

After spending full five months in the Philippine Islands, and since our schools were closed early in March for vacation, we felt it a good opportunity to visit other mission fields and gain additional information from those who have had large experience in real missionary work.

On March 30th Mrs. Williams and I took an Inter-Island Steamer for Manila, leaving Brother David Williams on the Philippine field to assist in the work during our absence.

We spent Easter Sunday and a few days in the following week in Manila. We met some of the leaders in other missions, and were kindly received in the Missionary Home of the Presbyterians.

After attending to some important business matters affecting our mission, we sailed for Hongkong on Wednesday, April 7th. After a pleasant journey, we arrived safely at Hongkong on Friday, April 9th, and were kindly received in Dr. Miller's Missionary Home in Kowloon. We spent two very profitable and pleasant days in Hongkong, meeting a number of prominent workers and friends.

Among those that came to the home were Dr. and Mrs. G. W. Leavell, who had been in charge of the Baptist Hospital in Wuchow. They reported to us fully the unsettled political conditions at Wuchow which led to the closing and sealing of their beautiful hospital building and the withdrawal of all the workers. Their lives were frequently in peril before they escaped from Wuchow.

French Indo-China

Two days later we took a French boat from Hongkong to French Indo-China, which landed us at Haiphong, the chief port in the Northern Province of Tonkin on Wednesday, April 14th. Here we were met by Rev. and Mrs. W. A. Pruett and were entertained hospitably in their comfortable missionary home. The first night in Indo-China was quite hot and the mosquitoes most persistent and numerous. However we were shown every possible favor and given everything that could minister to our comfort. We had

great joy in meeting these excellent young missionaries, especially as we had known Mrs. Pruett before she came to the field when she was Miss Faith Richards, the daughter of our home secretary, Rev. E. J. Richards. They have the oversight of the Haiphong Station, and an excellent work is being done in that important center. The Mission Hall down town was crowded to the doors and many standing. We were permitted to speak to them through an interpreter, and a deep interest was manifested. At Haiphong, Mr. Irwin and Mr. Cadman met us with the new mission automobile, and early Friday morning we again set out for the next point, which is Hanoi, in the same

tions for the night in a comfortable French Hotel. A few months ago a mission station had been planted at Vinh, and we went in the evening to the little hall to find it crowded to the door. A native worker was in charge, and he told us that twenty-seven had been baptized the preceding Sunday. Brother Irwin addressed the meeting, and we were permitted to witness to them also through an interpreter. The prospects at Vinh are most encouraging.

Leaving Vinh early the next morning, the second day's drive brought us to the ancient city of Hue (pronounced Whay), which is the Capital of Annam. Again we found a comfortable French hotel for

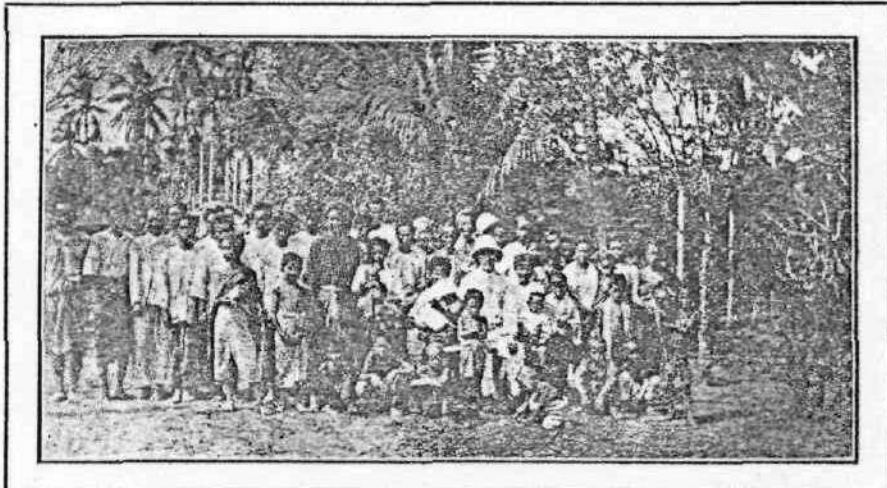
the night; and the third day brought us through to Tourane, the headquarters of our Indo-China Mission. We arrived at this point before noon, having covered 873 kilometers, or about 425 miles by automobile.

Tourane and the Native Bible School

What shall I say of the work at Tourane? We were delighted with our first impressions and are more delighted as we grow better acquainted. Resident here are Rev.

and Mrs. Irwin and their two children, Rev. and Mrs. Smith and child, and Rev. John Olsen. Brother Irwin is the chairman of the Mission, and Brother Olsen is Dean of the Bible School, while Brother Smith is the treasurer of the school and instructor in the Bible classes. Having a week before the opening of the conference, Brother Olsen arranged for daily lectures to the students, and Brother Irwin planned for a number of addresses in the chapel, with other very interesting appointments. The ministry to the Bible School was most interesting and delightful, although we felt much embarrassed in not being able to speak to the students in their own language. Brother Olsen encouraged us, however, and ably interpreted our messages; and we had the privilege of giving five addresses on the Deeper Christian Life, and Mrs. Williams also spoke four times on practical themes.

The students showed a very deep in-



Group of Christians at Battambang

province, and the headquarters of the mission printing press. Rev. and Mrs. Cadman received us cordially, and we were delighted with the wonderful work they have accomplished both on the station and in the publication work. The buildings are substantial and located in an excellent section of the town. They have a fine native church, where we were permitted to speak through an interpreter on Sunday morning, also in a platform meeting Sunday night. The fellowship with the little band of missionaries in our four o'clock Bible studies each afternoon we greatly enjoyed. Brother and Sister Worsnip, from Lungchow, China, had driven down in their car to meet us at Hanoi.

Through Annam by Motor

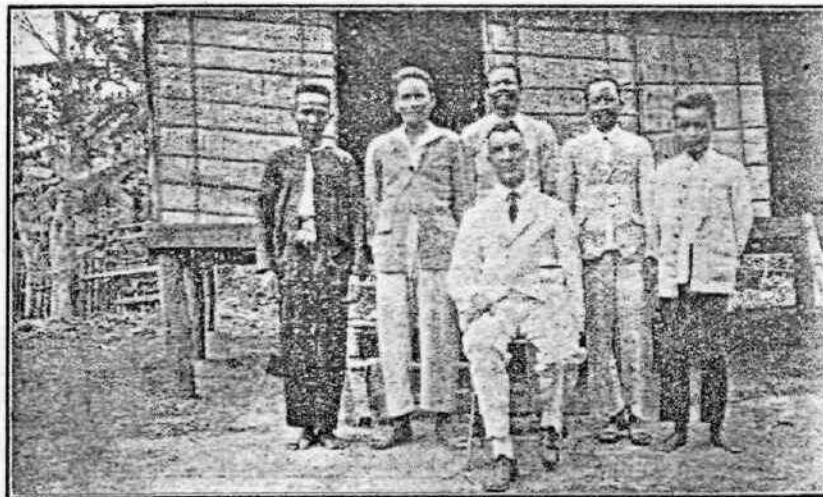
Early Monday morning, April 19th, we started with Brother Irwin for Tourane in the automobile. The first day's drive brought us to Vinh, a distance of 302 kilometers. Here we found accommoda-

terest, and the season of prayer at the close of each service was helpful. About eighteen of the men knelt at the altar for sanctification when the invitation was extended and others took definite steps of victory in their Christian lives. Brother Olsen seems to be specially gifted for this work, and we are told that the past year has been one of great spiritual blessing in the school. I wish our friends could have been present for one of these class periods. The students were usually in their places awaiting the opening of the class. When we stepped to the platform they would all rise as a token of respect and welcome. Brother Olsen would then announce a hymn and sit down at the little organ on the platform and play skillfully and lead the singing. They all would join in lustily but not always harmoniously. Then, after a word of prayer, we would be announced to speak, and Brother Olsen patiently interpreted the sentences into intelligent Annamese; and we could see from the expression on faces that they were receiving the message. We greatly enjoyed our ministry to the Bible School. We are told that thirteen of the men are appointed to definite fields of service for the coming year. They have adopted a very fine principle of combining study and soul-winning during the years of training in the school. Students are expected to spend one year out on the field in active service, alternating with the years they spend in study. In this way, it requires four years to complete the course—three years of study and one year of active service before graduating. It seems to be a wise and conservative plan and makes for thoroughness and stability in the character of worker that is turned out from the school.

The Closing Exercises

The closing exercises of the school were held on Friday night, April 30th. This was a very interesting service. The large chapel, seating about 300 people, was well filled, including about twenty of our American missionaries who had gathered for the conference. The platform was nicely decorated. Brother Olsen, as dean, was presiding; Mrs. Paul Carlson

played the organ, while Mr. Carlson played his violin and Mr. Peterson the cornet. After an instrumental selection, we all rose and sang "Coronation" in the Annamese language. The program then continued, and addresses were delivered by four of the advanced students, on the four points of the Four-Fold Gospel. The addresses were evidently delivered with ability, and God's presence was felt throughout the service. It sounded good to hear a chorus of the men students sing lustily in the Annamese "A hundred thousand souls a day, are passing one by one away, etc.," and to see their faces full of earnest determination to do what they could to get the message out to them. Before closing one of the students stepped to the platform and read in the Annamese



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language the following appreciation of our brief ministry among them, of which I assure you we felt most unworthy. Brother Olsen translated it into English, and you can imagine our embarrassment in listening to such strong terms of commendation so unmerited on our part, but we do thank God if in any little way He permitted us to pass on the message so directly to the perishing multitudes to whom these young people in turn will go out and minister.

This paper from the students will illustrate the characteristic manner in which the Annamese express their appreciation:

"Words of Good Wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Williams"

We, the students of the Annamese Bible Training School, with one heart and mind unite in the following simple, inelegant words to express to you, worthy Mr. and Mrs. Williams, the good serv-

ants of the Lord, our respectful wishes.

Before your arrival in French Indo-China we often used to hear through the missionaries and especially through Mr. Olsen, of your good name (reputation) and of your (mature) spiritual experience. So while we were daily expecting you, we prayed the more that the Lord would lead and guide you, giving you fair wind and pleasant weather in bringing you to this place, so that we might see your face and hear your sweet and tender counsel and instructions.

Thank God! Our hearts and our desires have truly been satisfied with joy and blessing, and through having you in our midst, we have, as it were, obtained precious jewels. So this evening you are both in our presence to hear and receive our words of commendation (praise) and good wishes.

Before you came to us, we had heard but one part in ten of your good name and fragrant reputation; but now, having met you face to face, we have seen and know the other nine parts as well. It is with us as it was with the Queen of Sheba when she stood before Solomon; she said: "It was a true report I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit, I believed not the words, until I came and mine

eyes had seen it: and behold the half was not told me."

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Williams! Since you came to us you have spoken to us a great many words of virtue, and given us much spiritual food, so that our hearts have been satisfied and our thirst has been slaked.

Because of the words preached by you, Mrs. Williams, our hearts have been moved to compassionate love for lost sinners who are walking the black, dark road that leads to the pit of torment and destruction; and we have definitely settled to consecrate ourselves to the Lord in order to proclaim His Gospel in every place, that lost sinners may accept the grace of God, in order to escape the wrath to come, and that they may, with us, at last inherit the blessings of the kingdom of heaven.

And again, because of the words preached by you, Mr. Williams, about the

truth of sanctification, our hearts have received the precious good seed of that truth, thereby helping us to know how to please God and to serve Him successfully. Truly, the truth of sanctification is an inexhaustible fountain of blessing, a boundless field of spiritual riches. But it won't be only we who will receive benefits from this blessing, but the millions of our fellow country-men who are living in the places to which we are going, will also receive this God's truth of sanctification and will bring forth its fruits.

Therefore, this evening being the last evening we shall be together with you, we pray to present to you these few words of commendation (praise) and good wishes in order to express to you our grateful thanks and to show forth our heartfelt affection for you. Please do not think these words exaggerated, for to speak as we have done is our duty, even as we read in Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

May the God of Peace stretch forth His almighty hand and lead you as you visit the church in French Indo-China and until you shall have returned to your native land; may He keep and preserve you, may He give you a long life, even until the Lord shall return to earth again. Amen.

The Students of the
Annamksee Bible School.

Opening a New Outstation

On the Sunday preceding the conference, we accompanied Brother Irwin to one of the new outstations, about twenty-five miles from Tourane. The place is called Loc-Thanh. The sun was very hot, but we started early in the morning. When we arrived, we found a neat little chapel already built and nicely seated to accommodate about one hundred. This chapel had been built and paid for entirely by the native church. As we approached, the people greeted us cordially and demonstrated their welcome by quite an explosion of fire-crackers. Soon after we entered the chapel, the people crowded in until standing room was at a premium. I was favored with a movable chair, but was soon crowded back until I was outside the door; however, I found the atmosphere more refreshing outside than in. Brother Irwin opened the service and

Mrs. Irwin sang a solo in the Annamese tongue. Brother Irwin then proceeded to speak, but the air was stifling and very hot. The crowds were pressing up against him to hear the Gospel. The deacons were fanning him from each side and doing their best to help. But one can hardly imagine the intensity of the heat and impurity of the air in which he conducted the service. As he closed, the meeting was opened for inquiry. Again dozens of earnest inquirers plied him with questions, and for another half hour he was held in the midst of this mass of people helping them to understand the Gospel message. Finally, he reluctantly withdrew, as it was past time to close the service. We returned to Tourane thanking God for the opportunity of seeing with our own eyes what we have occasionally read about—that is, a mission field where the natives were really "flocking" to hear the Gospel of Christ. The

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hunger for the message of salvation on this field really excels anything that we have ever witnessed. They tell us it is still more marked as we travel southward. The feature of self-support is growing rapidly. Brother Irwin has just now stepped in to tell me that the voluntary offerings from the regular collections in the Tourane Church here have amounted to \$67 during the past month, and the total offerings from the Tourane district including the outstations amounts to \$100 per month. This aspect is also most encouraging.

The Annual Conference

When we first planned our trip to French Indo-China, we did not anticipate

anything so delightful as to be able to remain for the annual conference; but on account of the political uprisings in South China, we were advised not to attempt the trip to Wuchow, so were thus able to spend more time in Indo-China. Then, too, the executive committee were kind enough to change the dates of the conference, calling it three weeks earlier than usual in order to make it possible for us to be present. Thus the Lord "drops for us handfuls of purpose" as we go forward trusting in Him alone for guidance.

The conference proper opened on Sunday, May 2,—the first two days being devoted to prayer and the study of the Word. The first service was held on Sunday morning in the large mission church. The building was well filled with an audience of over 200, including a score or more of our missionaries. Rev. E. F. Irwin presided, and we had the privilege of speaking through an interpreter on the theme, "Love as the Crowning Virtue of the Child of God."

In the early part of the service, two native children were dedicated to God, and a precious communion service was observed at the close. Each morning of the conference, we were permitted to meet with the missionaries in an hour and a half of prayer and Bible study, when God manifested His presence in a gracious manner. Brother Irwin then presided each day at the business sessions, and our hearts were deeply stirred as we listened to the marvelous reports presented by the various missionaries. It amazed us to learn that over 1,600 converts had been baptized in this mission during the past year, and over \$5,000 had been contributed by the native church for the extension of the **Gofpd**. It is the aim of the mission to double the number of converts each year. During the past year, this goal has been reached, and they are praying it may be so next year as well.

We learned much of missionary methods of work by listening to the various reports and discussions in the conference; and we were deeply impressed with the most excellent work that is being accomplished all over this great field. We shall hereafter have a deeper interest than ever before in French Indo-China, and shall be in a position to pray and labor for its evangelization with a more intelligent zeal than could have been possible had we not been right on the field with our dear fellow-laborers in this conference. A - U A A O ^ 7 . / ? X 4 **SH-m**